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30 June 1952

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Southeast Asia Panel Paper

1. I talked with Mr. Philip W. Bonsal, Director of Southeast Asian Affairs, Department of State, today regarding the paper on Southeast Asia, and found him willing to agree to the reduction in the number of undertakings by consolidating those which are almost identical.

2. Mr. Bonsal's principal preoccupation in respect of the Southeast Asia Panel is his feeling that a basic policy mistake is being made by the evidence that we are trying to go ahead with "hot" war preparations at a time when we are trying to convince the people of the area that we are going to be the winning team, and they are not going to be over-run by Communist aggression. He thinks it a cardinal mistake for us to let the Governments of the area know we even envisage the possibility that we may have to resort in their countries to such techniques as para-military activities, escape and evasion, etc. For this reason he thinks that preparations along those lines should be carried on either only in the planning stage, or to the extent possible without letting the preparations come to the attention of the local government. It is this basic feeling in respect of policy which has made him unwilling to agree to the phraseology in the current draft in respect of para-military and other "hot" war preparatory activities.

Psychological Staff Division

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